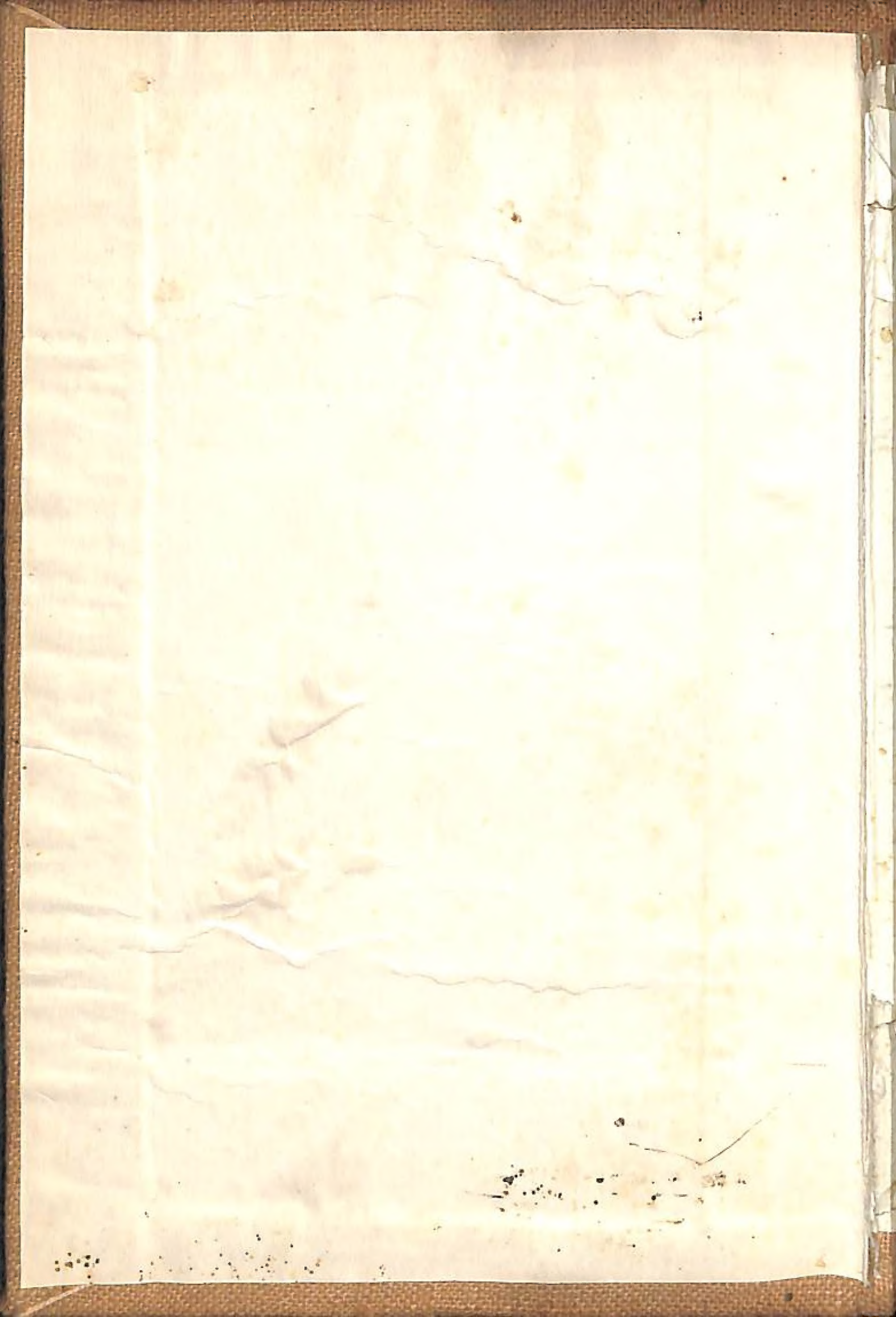
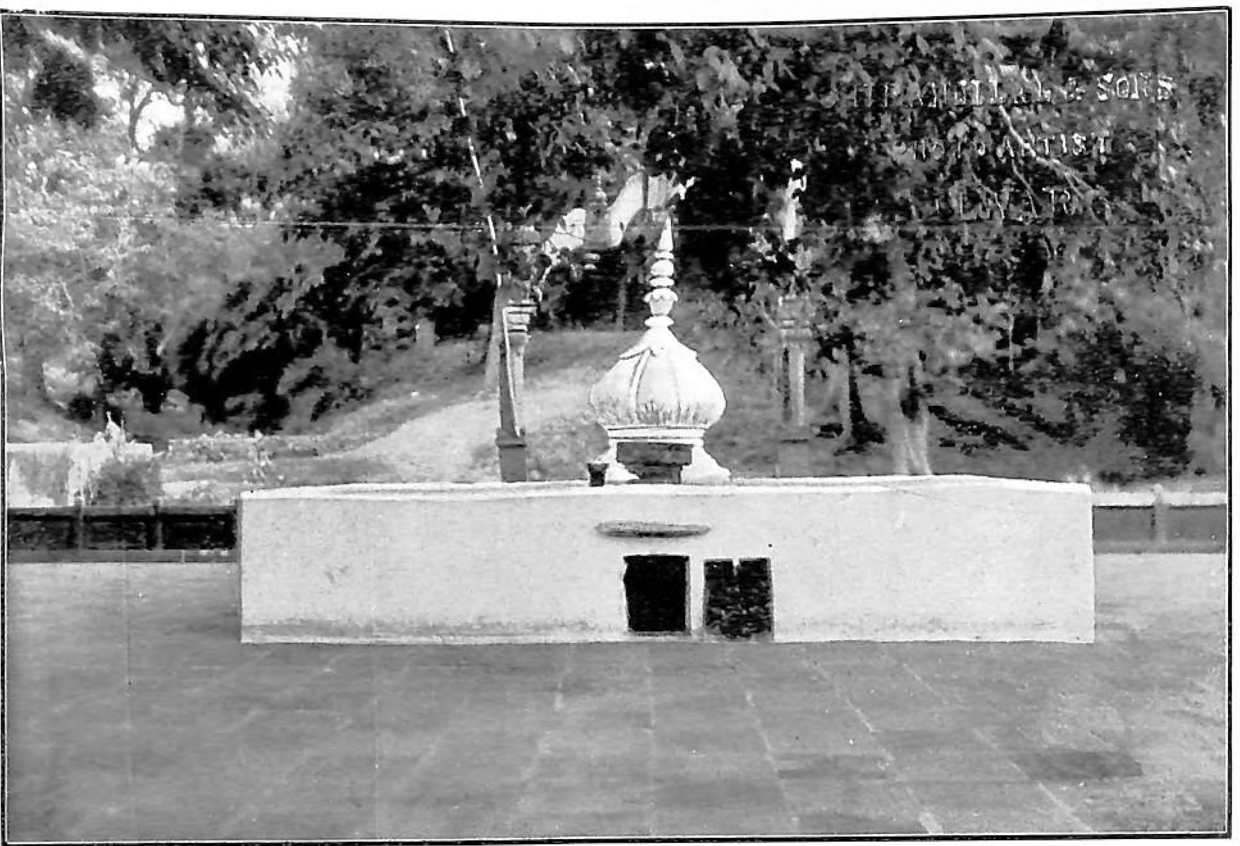
SONGS
From
BHARATRIHARI.

By
Lal Gopal Mukerji.
and
Bankey Behari.



SONGS
from
BHARATRIHARI



By Courtesy of Dr. Mata Prasad, Alwar.]

Songs from Bharatrihari

By

Sir LAL GOPAL MUKERJI Kt.
Formerly one of His Majesty's Judges of the High Court of Judicature at Allahabad

and

BANKEY BEHARI
Editor, Temple of Mysticism Series

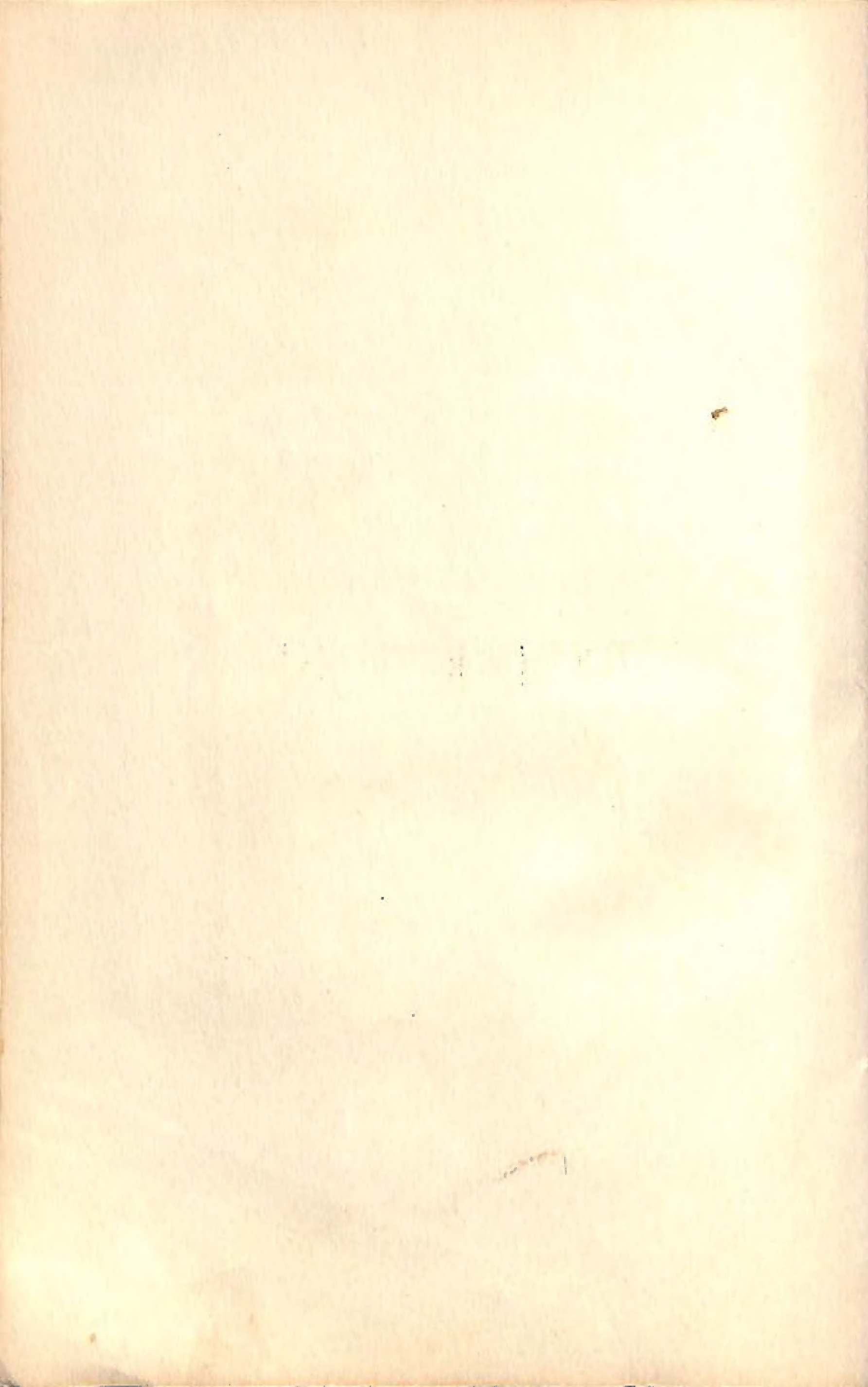
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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION.

A king has come down to posterity and is remembered not for his exploits in arms, the strong imprints of which he has left on the sands of time, but for being a singer of spiritual values, whose songs, no less than three hundred ślokas, usually quartets in number deal with a wide range of subjects, from the love of the Creator and erotic poetry to ethical and moral advice and appeals to renunciation of the world. Classified under three heads they are generally culled under, Śṛngār, Nīti and Vairāgya. They are as appears from their contents, written by him at different periods of his life—from the time when he dwelt in the midst of gaiety and was known as Maharaja Bhartṛhari ruler of the vast kingdom of Ujjain to the period when with the garments of the barks of trees, he wandered with the name of Śiva on his lips in the midst of beautiful scenes drawing his inspiration from the murmuring brooks and

the bubbling springs. In these offerings to poesy we have the glimpses of revolt, of sympathy and of mystic raptures.

Hermit Bhartṛhari, is the phase of his life with which we deal in this book, and of his writings of that period. This must not be understood that we do not consider them equally important or excellent from the literary point of view that we ignore the Śṛngār and Nīti Śatakas, but because that is beyond our subject which is Mysticism. And it is here that we find flashes of it. As to his first two works who will not stop to brood and marvel at the literary excellence and imagery of his poems in the Nīti and the Śṛngār Śatakas ? Therein, in choice similie to take an illustration, we have his description of the attributes of true friendship:—

क्षीरेणात्मगतोदकाय हि गुणा दत्ताः पुरा तेऽखिलाः
क्षीरे तापमवेक्ष्य तेन पयसा स्वात्मा कृशानौ हुतः ।
गन्तुं पावकमुन्मनस्तदभवद्दृष्ट्वा तु मित्रापदं
युक्तं तेन जलेन शाम्यति सतां मैत्री पुनस्त्वीदृशी ॥

The friendship that exists between two good persons finds its parallel in that of milk for water. It is not observable that when water is put into milk, it disappears losing its very identity, becoming milk as it were. When the two together are placed on the boiling pan, water sacrifices itself, annihilating into the form of vapour, for it cannot endure the sight of its friend, the milk being burnt. Milk then wishing to give company to its departing friend, the water, ebbulates and wants to throw itself into the fire. And it is not calmed down till water is poured into it again, then alone it subsides. The two friends, thus meet again.

In his Śṛngār Śataka speaking of women he says:—

नूनं हि ते कविवरा विपरीतबोधा
ये नित्यमाहुरबला इति कामिनीनाम् ।
याभिर्विलोलतरतारकटाक्षपातैः
शक्रादयोऽपि विजिता अबलाः कथं ताः ॥

Evidently the poets have no sense. They call women weak. Those whose amorous glances have conquered even gods like Indra surely they are not weak.

A keen observer, none will deny. His experiences sometimes bitter are really revealing. Here is one :—

I speak the Truth without any mitigation. Just listen. In this world there is nothing sweeter than a woman, nothing a source of greater bitterness of misery too.

स्मितेन भावेन च लज्जया भिया
पराङ्मुखैरर्धकटाक्षवीक्षणैः ।
वचोभिरीर्ष्याकलहेन लीलया
समस्तभावैः खलु बन्धनं स्त्रियः ॥

In the pages following we have selected from his Vairāgya Śataka. Suffice it to say that some of these Ślokas are really wonderful and engrave themselves on the hearts of people who do meditate on the nature of life. We

have called them songs, and so they really are. It is possible that some other editors might have selected different ones from his whole set of a century of Ślokas. It is all a matter of one's tastes. Our only apology is they have appealed to us more than others and hence they find a place here.

The translation is always a difficult task. Owing to the method of *Samāsa*, by which several words are joined together, in this compressed form a far wider ambit of ideas is covered in a few words. Again, a literal translation seldom succeeds in expressing the beauty of the original ślokas and at the same time makes the reading lifeless and insipid. However, the throb and the pulse is retained if while retaining the sense the liberty is taken with words. We have therefore tried to bring out the sense of the *songs* by even adding a few words of our own here and there, wherever we thought it necessary. The book is primarily meant for

those English knowing gentlemen who are unacquainted with the Sanskrit literature. However for benefit of those who know Sanskrit also and would like to remember the lines in the original and to enjoy their charm we have given the original lines also. There are many editions of the text of Vairāgya Śataka and several translations also, by Kale, Apte, and from Ramkrishna Mission Institute. But they differ only in minor points while the sense remains undisturbed in the various readings of the texts. In our selections, however, we have adopted the version which appeared to us to bring out the sense best.

The theme of the songs in the Vairāgya Śataka is the transitoriness of the world, the ephemeral nature of what passes for pleasure and happiness in this world. The appeal is to a simple life, which has an ideal and a goal before us, *viz.*, self-realization. Bhartṛhari is equipped to speak on the subject with confidence as he had

seen the material life as intimately as the spiritual one. Apart from the melody, one is thrilled by the coherent exposition and the vigorous appeal these lines make to the mind. Bhartṛhari is an exponent of Vedānta, and we see the religious teacher in him at various places drawing our attention to the injunctions of the Śāstras. While advocating Vairāgya, Bhartṛhari does not point to any negative aspect of renunciation that would make us helpless and lazy, but advocates a spirit of detachment. "Sensual indulgence is always attended by fear of disease, beauty is ever exposed to the risk of old age and even a good name may be exposed to risk at the hands of a wily and unscrupulous slanderer," says he. Bhartṛhari insists on a logical approach at these subjects. However we find with vehemence he advocates individual effort, and seems as of old to point to the efficacy of *Name*—as the pathway that will lead to self-realization. He is never tired of insisting on

chanting the name of Śiva. His theme throughout is the impermanence of everything all around:—

भ्रातः कष्टमहो महान् स नृपतिः सामन्तचक्रं च तत्
पार्श्वे तस्य च सापि राजपरिषत्ताश्चन्द्रबिम्बाननाः ।
उद्रिक्तः स च राजपुत्रनिवहस्ते बन्दिनस्ताः कथाः
सर्वं यस्य वशादगात्स्मृतिपदं कालाय तस्मै नमः ॥

Brother, watch how painfully does time efface, turning into dim memory them that once were powerful kings surrounded by ministers, counsellors, queens with faces beautiful as the rays of the moon, impetuous princes and bards. Time is most powerful. Must we not make a bow unto it ?

And we are by now familiar with his exhortation to give up these vain quests and "Seek ye, my dear friends only That. Enjoy That the taste of which will make the very kingship of the three worlds insipid. Once you have tasted this unfading enjoyment, you will no longer find pleasure in rich food and clothes or even honour."

तस्मादनन्तमजरं परमं विकासि
तद्ब्रह्म चिन्तय किमेभिरसद्विकल्पैः ।
यस्यानुषङ्गिण इमे भुवनाधिपत्य-
भोगादयः कृपणमेकमता भवन्ति ॥

The life of Bhartṛhari fits in with what we find in his songs. A few words about it will not be out of place and in any case will elucidate some points in the following songs. We have not been able to find any authentic data about his life. All that has come down filtering through the ages is more or less traditional and hearsay. But perhaps all are agreed that a domestic aversion led Bhartṛhari to forsake his kingdom and take up Sannyāsa. It is during this period of Sannyāsa that he is accredited with having composed these songs.

He is said to have flourished about the first or second century of the Christian Era. He was the ruler of Ujjain and was fortunate in having for

his minister his brother the well known Vikramāditya after whom we have the Vikrama Era.

The tradition has it that Bhartṛhari had a favourite queen to whom he was greatly devoted. Probably the queen was the youngest of all others, or maybe between her and the king there was a great disparity of age. Whatever be the cause, the queen did not return the love of the king, although she apparently made great professions while in her heart of hearts she disliked him and had her affections centred in one of the Officers of the State. The latter pretended to reciprocate, in the hope of anticipated lifts in his office, but genuinely he had regards only for a courtesan in the Capital and for none else. The courtesan on her part sold her love to any body who paid the price for it and the officer of the state could lay no special preference to her love nor did she in her heart hold him in esteem.

While such intrigues were progressing in the royal household and in the capital, a simple act was being done that was to disturb the equanimity of the Palace. In the jungle close by one of the king's subjects, a Yogī, was doing penance for years to propitiate his deity, and luckily for him, his penances proved efficacious and his god rewarded him by a little unrivalled gift. It was a fruit, the partaker of which if young was to maintain his youthful charms, while, besides, anybody who would take it would get the boon of life immortal.

The Yogī thought that he was not a fit person to enjoy the blessings that the fruit meant to confer, and considered the considerate King Bhartṛhari as the right person to enjoy it, so that a just rule might be administered in the realm. Having pondered thus, the Yogī decided to present it to the king.

The next morning the Yogī visited the king when he was holding his court. He was readily admitted into

the presence of the king, as was the wont with the latter who held the pious men in high esteem. The Yogī enumerated the virtues of the fruit and offered it to the king. The king gratefully accepted it and rewarded the Brahman. The king greatly loved his queen, and she was more precious to him than his own life. He therefore decided to offer it to the queen that she might brave the effect of time and stand its ravages. The queen after offering a few apologies accepted it. Then she thought that her paramour was more worthy than herself to eat the fruit, for love however ill-placed-effaces self and delights in the welfare of the beloved. The queen gave the fruit to her lover. For the same reasons that prompted the queen, the fruit was passed on by the officer to his beloved courtesan. The courtesan had got tired of her life spent in the house of ill fame. She would not like to perpetuate her youth if it was to be passed in such unholy

surroundings. She despised the corrupt profession and would feign like to discontinue it for ever. She thought that the only person who was worthy of the great prize was king Bhartṛhari.

The next day the courtesan took the fruit to the king and enumerating its virtues offered it to him. The king recognized it as the one he had offered to his dear queen and was taken aback at how it could find its way to the courtesan. Immediately he sent for the Yogī and inquired if he had a second fruit. On receipt of the Yogī's reply in the negative, the king instituted an inquiry and the truth was revealed to him.

It was a critical moment for him, and one of tragic disillusionment. These moments always precede the moment of conversion. In an instant the enlightenment comes and one feels that he had been all the time in error, leading a life for which he was never meant and reposing his confidences and love

at places and in people who were not deserving. When such shocks come, the period of repentance, at once genuine and true follows. This has been the case with many a great devotees in the world. The impact has been sharp and they have recoiled with it. The insipidness and hypocrisy of life has dawned as if by a stroke from the miracle man. Sometimes hatred and repulsion, at other times grief and loss and yet at other moments the bare glimpse of the heavenly light has changed the careers of many a great soul and guided the pilgrims after perfection to their Home. When the glass case was broken and the conventional forms passing for love stood in their nakedness the gruesome sight was so hideous that Bhartṛhari revolted and left the idle pursuit in which he had been passing his life. The illumination was to come later but the Teacher in this case was a woman, howsoever indirectly she contributed, as in the case of Tulasīdās towards the Search. However he was bitter at the

outset when he received the shock, and this bitterness is portrayed by him in his oft quoted lines:—

यां चिन्तयामि सततं मयि सा विरक्ता
साप्यन्यमिच्छति जनं स जनोऽन्यसक्तः ।
अस्मत्कृते च परितुष्यति काचिदन्या
धिक्तां च तं च मदनं च इमां च मां च ।।

"She who is always present in my mind has no love for me,
She pines for one who is attached to another,
This another in her turn cares not for him and has her love placed elsewhere,
A woman loves me (though I care not for her);
God of Love ! you are to be pitied and so am I and the rest of the lot."

Wandering faquirs in ochre-coloured robes are still to be seen, every now and then, moving from place to place,

playing on a stringed instrument and singing songs about Raja Bhartṛhari. It would appear that a sect of Yogīs was founded by Bhartṛhari himself or some disciple of his. Raja Bhartṛhari lives in the songs sung by him and will be immortal in his fame so long as there will be people to care on this earth for the elegance and melody of the Sanskrit literature.

Dasehra Day,
1936.

L. G. M.
B. B.



Samadh of Bharatrihari.

(By Courtesy of Dr. mata Prasad, Alwar.

SONGS
from
BHARATRIHARI

BHARATRIHARI

In short verses the Hindus excel. Their mastery of form, their play of fancy, their depth and tenderness of feeling, are all exquisite. Of the many who wrote such verses, the greatest is Bharatrihari.

—Arthur W. Ryder.

[An anthology of world poetry
Edited by M. V. Doren, Cassell.]

उत्खातं निधिशङ्कया क्षितितलं ध्माता गिरेर्धातवो
निस्तीर्णः सरिताम्पतिर्नृपतयो यत्नेन सन्तोषिताः ।
मन्त्राराधनतत्परेण मनसा नीताः श्मशाने निशाः
प्राप्तः काणवराटकोऽपि न मया तृष्णेऽधुना मुञ्च माम् ॥

In search of treasures did I dig up the face of the earth. In pursuit of alchemy many a ore did I melt. In search of wealth did I cross the very oceans. To obtain power and wealth did I pass nights after nights in the cremation ground, chanting the incantations. Yet all my efforts did not bring me even a broken shell. I sought for the cause. It lay in my desires. Accursed are they. I pray thee O greed, leave me now.

1—S. F. B.

भ्रान्तं देशमनेकदुर्गविषमं प्राप्तं न किञ्चित्फलं
त्यक्त्वा जातिकुलाभिमानमुचितं सेवा कृता निष्फला ।
भुक्तं मानविवर्जितं परगृहेष्वाशङ्कया काकवत्
तृष्णे दुर्मति पापकर्मनिरते नाद्यापि सन्तुष्यसि ॥

In vain did I tread difficult paths and roamed through inaccessible regions. Unmindful of my high birth, did I serve mean people but with no profitable results. In shame and in disgrace did I pass my days, terrified in approaching un-welcome homes, and living on crumbs thrown in disdain at me as to a crow. Yet with all this far from sight remained the goal. Accursed desire, thou promptest one to evil deeds. Fie on thee. Art thou still unsatisfied with my self-abasement?

खलोल्लापाः सोढाः कथमपि तदाराधनपरै-
र्निगृह्यान्तर्बाष्पं हसितमपि शून्येन मनसा ।
कृतश्चित्तस्तम्भः प्रतिहतधियामञ्जलिरपि
त्वमाशे मोघाशे किमपरमतो नर्त्तयसि माम् ॥

I put up with their light words to propitiate the wicked ones. With subdued tears and a broken heart I feigned a vacant smile. I suppressed my emotions and composed myself. In supplication I bowed even to those fools. Yet all to no purpose. Accursed and delusive Hope, why playest thou thus with me still ?

आदित्यस्य गतागतैरहरहः संक्षीयते जीवितं
व्यापारैर्बहुकार्यभारगुरुभिः कालो न विज्ञायते ।
दृष्ट्वा जन्मजराविपत्तिमरणं त्रासश्च नोत्पद्यते
पीत्वा मोहमयीं प्रमादमदिरामुन्मत्तभूतं जगत् ॥

With the daily dawn and the sunset, the destined days of life are shortening. Time flies. Engrossed in the affairs of the world we do not see it go. Birth, decay, sickness, and even death do not arouse us to the consciousness of our sad plight. All this is proof sure that the gilded phenomena around us like the ruddy wine has intoxicated the world and made it insensate to the true nature of things.

निवृत्ता भोगेच्छा पुरुषबहुमानो विगलितः
समानाः स्वर्याताः सपदि सुहृदो जीवितसमाः ।
शनैर्यष्ट्योत्थानं घनतिमिररुद्धे च नयने
अहो धृष्टः कायस्तदपि मरणापायचकितः ॥

With the approach of old age the hunger for enjoyment have disappeared. The body is enfeebled and all self-respect gone. The dear ones of our age have already gone to rest in heaven. On crutches we carry ourselves and with sight impaired walk. Yet, how shameless that this body trembles to think of its ultimate dissolution.

भोगा न भुक्ता वयमेव भुक्ता-

स्तपो न तप्तं वयमेव तप्ताः ।

कालो न यातो वयमेव याता-

स्तृष्णा न जीर्णा वयमेव जीर्णाः ॥

Innumerable are the enjoyments in life. We could not exhaust them, rather are we ourselves exhausted. Infinite was the number of penances. The body succumbed only to extreme misery. Time did not know its end rather we saw ours. Our desires never know infirmity or old age, we ourselves have aged.

क्षान्तं न क्षमया गृहोचितसुखं त्यक्तं न सन्तोषतः
सोढा दुःसहशीतवाततपनक्लेशा न तप्तं तपः ।
ध्यातं वित्तमहर्निशं नियमितप्राणैर्न शम्भोः पदं
तत्तत्कर्म कृतं यदेव मुनिभिस्तैस्तैः फलैर्वञ्चिताः ॥

Forgiveness we practised but not out of compassion. The comforts of home we renounced but not willingly. Bitter rigours of climate, weather and seasons we bore but prompted by no idea of austerities We practised night-long meditation only to please Mammon. The control of breath we practised but not with thoughts centred at the feet of the Lord. To all appearances our acts were the envy of sages, yet no beneficial fruits ever fell to our lot.

अजानन् दाहात्म्यं पततु शलभस्तीव्रदहने
स मीनोऽप्यज्ञानाद्बडिशयुतमश्नातु पिशितम् ।
विजानन्तोऽप्येते वयमिह विपज्जालजटिलान्
न मुञ्चामः कामानहह गहनो मोहमहिमा ॥

What does the moth see in the candle-flame ? It falls into it. Life departs. By ignorance prompted thus doth he act. The fish swallows the bait. Little doth she see death sting behind the meat; her act the fruit of ignorance. How wonderful should the force of attachment be, that we, being thoroughly conversant with the result of actions, do not care to cut asunder the network which brings distress and misery in the end !

फलमलमशनाय स्वादु पानाय तोयं
क्षितिरपि शयनार्थं वाससे वल्कलं च ।
नवधनमधुपानभ्रान्तसर्वेन्द्रियाणा-
मविनयमनुमन्तुं नोत्सहे दुर्जनानाम् ॥

For food, fruits in plenty grow. For drink, the sweet streams flow. For bed is the earth. For dress the beautiful trees supply their bark. Should man then thus enriched, in supplication kneel before the drunk and wealthy and demoralize himself by their jeers?

विपुलहृदयैर्धन्यैः कैश्चिज्जगज्जनितं पुरा
विधृतमपरैर्दत्तं चान्यैर्विजित्य तृणं यथा ।
इह हि भुवनान्यन्ये धीराश्चतुर्दश भुञ्जते
कतिपयपुरस्वाम्ये पुंसां क एष मदज्वरः ॥

The almighty Lord created the worlds in days of yore. Others—large-hearted—were there who on their shoulders gladly bore the burden of them. There were some who conquered many a kingdom and realizing their worthlessness gave them away. Others have flourished who supplied the wants of millions of afflicted ones. In the face of such personages, has the vanity of the owners of a few acres any place?

यदा किञ्चिज्ज्ञोऽहं द्विप इव मदान्धः समभवं
तदा सर्वज्ञोऽस्मीत्यभवदवलिप्तं मम मनः ।
यदा किञ्चित्किञ्चिद्बुधजनसकाशादवगतं
तदा मूर्खोऽस्मीति ज्वर इव मदो मे व्यपगतः ॥

When I knew very little, I thought I knew all. Vain I was like the mad elephant, blinded with passion. Fortunately as I came in touch with the enlightened ones I realized I had known nothing. Thus my conceit disappeared with the dawning of Truth.

अतिक्रान्तः कालो लटभललनाभोगसुभगो
भ्रमन्तः श्रान्ताः स्मः सुचिरमिह संसारसरणौ ।
इदानीं स्वःसिन्धोस्तटभुवि समाक्रन्दनगिरः
सुतारैः फूत्कारैः शिव शिव शिवेति प्रतनुमः ॥

That wild passion of youth that sought to devour the youthful charms of jewel-bedecked ladies is past. A considerable portion of life has been wasted pursuing the phantoms of flesh—the objects of sensual pleasures. I feel exhausted. Now have I determined to denounce these temptresses who entangle by their blandishments and to pass my days on the holy banks of the Ganges, ever chanting the name of Śiva.

माने म्लायिनि खण्डिते च वसुनि व्यर्थे प्रयातेऽर्थिनि
क्षीणे बन्धुजने गते परिजने नष्टे शनैर्यौवने ।
युक्तं केवलमेतदेव सुधियां यज्जह्नुकन्यापयः-
पूतग्रावगिरीन्द्रकन्दरतटीकुञ्जे निवासः क्वचित् ॥

With power and wealth turned alien: with the means of bestowing charity exhausted: with brothers and sisters, wife and children, kinsmen and the loved ones departed from life: see the right moment is come. Wise one, retreat into solitude, to some holy corner on a hill entwined by the holy waters of the Ganges.

भोगे रोगभयं कुले च्युतिभयं वित्ते नृपालाद्भयं
माने दैन्यभयं बले रिपुभयं रूपे जराया भयम् ।
शास्त्रे वादिभयं गुणे खलभयं काये कृतान्ताद्भयं
सर्वं वस्तु भयान्वितं भुवि नृणां वैराग्यमेवाभयम् ॥

Satisfaction of sensual desires may lead to disease. Glory of high birth may end in disgrace. In wealth and its abundance the wise one sees the watchful jealous eye of the king. Pride carries with it the fear of supplication. Strength has the fear of enemies. Beauty is ever threatened with decay. Knowledge of Śāstras is threatened with unwholesome discussions. This body is haunted with the fear of death. Away from these attachments lies peace—in renunciation alone—for ever and ever

वयं येभ्यो जाताश्चिरपरिगता एव खलु ते
समं यैः संवृद्धाः स्मृतिविषयतां तेऽपि गमिताः ।
इदानीमेते स्मः प्रतिदिवसमासन्नपतनाद्
गतास्तुल्यावस्थां सिकतिलनदीतीरतरुभिः ॥

Our parents have long left us. Our friends who flourished and grew with us, they too are now lost to memory. We are now like the trees that stand on the sandy banks of a river, with roots gradually crumbling and wasting away with the dash of the inrushing currents.

यत्रानेकः क्वचिदपि गृहे तत्र तिष्ठत्यथैको
यत्राप्येकस्तदनु बहवस्तत्र चान्ते न चैकः ।
इत्थं चेमौ रजनिदिवसौ लोलयन् द्वाविवाक्षौ
कालः काल्या भुवनफलके क्रीडति प्राणसारैः ॥

The house that was at one time inhabited by so many now lies deserted. Another which was at one time occupied by only one is now too much crowded. Who does not know that a time shall come when none will remain therein. We are like mere pawns in this world—a board—whereon God Mahākāl is playing at dice with his consort Kālī, the dices being the night and day.

तपस्यन्तः सन्तः किमधिनिवसामः सुरनदीं
गुणोदारान् दाराननुपरिचरामः सविनयम् ।
पिबामः शास्त्रौघानुत विविधकाव्यामृतरसान्
न विद्मः किं कुर्मः कतिपयनिमेषायुषि जने ॥

The space of life is so short and there are so many things to do. We cannot do all. Then which of these shall we choose? To pass our moments in meditation on the banks of the Ganges, or to devote ourselves to women of quality or to drink deep from the fountain of the Śastras or to enjoy beautiful poems?

गङ्गातीरे हिमगिरिशिलाबद्धपद्मासनस्य
ब्रह्मध्यानाभ्यसनविधिना योगनिद्रां गतस्य ।
किं तैर्भाव्यं मम सुदिवसैर्यत्र ते निर्विशङ्काः
संप्राप्स्यन्ते जरठहरिणा गात्रकण्डूविनोदम् ॥

When will those happy days dawn, when seated in the Padma posture on the pure Himalyan peaks by the side of the holy Ganges, unmindful of the surroundings, with closed eyes shall I contemplate the Brahma, absorbed in Yoga: while the old deer shall fearlessly come and rub its shoulders against my body to pacify its itching sensations?

स्फुरत्स्फारज्योत्स्नाधवलिततले क्वापि पुलिने
सुखासीनाः शान्तध्वनिषु रजनीषु द्युसरितः ।
भवाभोगोद्विग्नाः शिव शिव शिवेत्युच्चवचसः
कदा यास्यामोऽन्तर्गतबहुलबाष्पाकुलदशाम् ॥

When will those happy days come when tired of ministering to the whims, pleasures and enjoyments of the body, we shall be chanting the Name of Lord Śiva, seated on the holy banks of the Ganges, its waters glittering in the pervading brilliant moonlight softly playing on it, with silence reigning throughout the night?

आशा नाम नदी मनोरथजला तृष्णातरङ्गाकुला
रागग्राहवती वितर्कविहगा धैर्यद्रुमध्वंसिनी ।
मोहावर्त्तसुदुस्तरातिगहना प्रोत्तुङ्गचिन्तातटी
तस्याः पारगता विशुद्धमनसो नन्दन्ति योगीश्वराः ॥

Hope is like a river: desires the water therein: avarice is the ripples and attachment for the objects of the world are the alligators to be found in it. Doubts are the water-fowls. Glamour of the world is the whirlpool in it: cares and anxieties the slippery banks, slowly eating away the roots of the Tree of Contentment that stands there. How difficult to cross the River of Life! Blessed is the Yogī who does it with a pure heart, and attains to joy.

भोगा मेघवितानमध्यविलसत्सौदामिनीचञ्चला
आयुर्वायुविघट्टिताब्जपटली लीनाम्बुवद्भङ्गुरम् ।
लोला यौवनलालसास्तनुभृतामित्याकलय्य द्रुतं
योगे धैर्यसमाधिसिद्धिसुलभे बुद्धिं विदध्वं बुधाः ॥

The enjoyments of the people of the world, the satisfaction of senses are like the flash of lightning in the rain-cloud. The life of man is transitory like drops of water sticking to clouds scattered hither and thither by the blast of winds. The passions and hopes of youth are turbulent. The wise ones, therefore, collecting their mind with patience enter Yoga.

एतस्माद्विरमेन्द्रियार्थगहनादायासकादाश्रया-

च्छ्रेयोमार्गमशेषदुःखशमनव्यापारदक्षं क्षणात् ।

स्वात्मीभावमुपैहि सन्त्यज निजां कल्लोललोलां गतिं

मा भूयो भज भङ्गुरां भवरतिं चेतः प्रसीदाधुना ॥

Mind calm thyself. To satisfy the senses do not exert strenuously for the objects the worldlings aspire after. Seek internal peace, which shall destroy sorrows and lead to salvation. Know thy nature. Restrain the fruitless movements. Never seek what is transitory and liable to destruction. Seek refuge in the Ātmā wherein alone lies Peace.

यूयं वयं वयं यूयमित्यासीन्मतिरावयोः ।
किं जातमधुना येन यूयं यूयं वयं वयम् ॥

There was a time when so deep was our attachment that I was thou and thou I. Things have since changed and what a change! I am now myself and thou art thyself.

प्राणाघातान्निवृत्तिः परधनहरणे संयमः सत्यवाक्यं
काले शक्त्या प्रदानं युवतिजनकथामूकभावःपरेषाम् ।
तृष्णास्रोतोविभङ्गो गुरुषु च विनयः सर्वभूतानुकम्पा
सामान्यः सर्वशास्त्रेष्वनुपहतविधिः श्रेयसामेष पन्थाः ॥

Not to kill any living being: not to be tempted to steal other people's property: to speak the truth: to distribute in charity according to one's capacity: not to participate in discussions about other people's wives: to curb the flow of greed: to be meek before teachers: to sympathise with all creatures: to have faith in the Śāstras and to make no distinction between faith and faith: these are the various paths leading to everlasting Bliss.

मातर्लक्ष्मि भजस्व कञ्चिदपरं मत्काङ्क्षिणी मास्मभू-
र्भोगेभ्यः स्पृहयालवो नहि वयं का निःस्पृहाणामसि ।
सद्यः स्यूतपलाशपत्रपुटिकापात्रे पवित्रीकृते
भिक्षासक्तुभिरेव सम्प्रति वयं वृत्तिं समीहामहे ॥

O Mother Lakṣmī, spread thou thy snares elsewhere; seek thou now some other more obliging devotee. Abandon hopes to entangle me. I have no desire left for worldly enjoyments. Before desireless beings like me, thou wilt find thyself helpless. Determined am I now to pass my days, living on a handful of fried grain flour got by begging, using the Palās leaves for the princely crockery.

रम्यं हर्म्यतलं न किं वसतये श्रव्यं न गेयादिकं
किं वा प्राणसमासमागमसुखं नैवाधिकं प्रीतये ।
किं तु भ्रान्तपतङ्गपक्षपवनव्यालोलदीपाङ्कुर-
च्छायाचञ्चलमाकलय्य सकलं सन्तो वनान्तं गताः ॥

Had not many of the saints, the grandest of the palaces to dwell in and the sweetest of songs to hear ? Was not the company of charming damsels ever ready at their beck and call ? What was it then that drove them to the forests ?

Yes, they were possessed of it all. They forsook the world and its allurements because they saw the transient nature of the world, like the falling wings of the moth, like the flickering shadow of the burning candle-flame. The instability of the world drove them from it.

मही रम्या शय्या विपुलमुपधानं भुजलता
वितानं चाकाशं व्यजनमनुकूलोऽयमनिलः ।
स्फुरद्दीपश्चन्द्रो विरतिवनितासङ्गमुदितः
सुखं शान्तः शेते मुनिरतनुभूतिर्नृप इव ॥

The sages enjoy the bare ground as their bed on which in comfort they sleep as the kings on their elegant couches. Their arm serves for a soft pillow, the sky for a canopy, the fragrant breeze for a fan, the moon for a lamp. Renunciation is their consort in whose warm embrace they enjoy the same pleasure as a King finds in the company of his loving Queen.

एकाकी निःस्पृहः शान्तः पाणिपात्रो दिगम्बरः ।
कदा शम्भो भविष्यामि कर्मनिर्मूलनक्षमः ॥

Tell me O Śiva, when shall I find solitude, be freed from desires and obtain peace? When shall my hand serve me as the sole receptacle to receive water, the space around cover me as with garments? When shall I uproot the tree, born of the fruit of my Karmas, and obtain liberation from rebirth, the direct consequence of our actions?

यतो मेरुः श्रीमान्निपतति युगान्ताग्निवलितः
समुद्राः शुष्यन्ति प्रचुरमकरग्राहनिलयाः ।
धरा गच्छत्यन्तं धरणिधरपादैरपि धृता
शरीरे का वार्ता करिकलभकर्णाग्रचपले ॥

In that great conflagration of Pralaya even the mighty Mount Sumeru shall crumble to dust: the wide Oceans, the home of alligators and crocodiles shall dry up: even the earth on which these huge mountains find support shall be destroyed. What support does this frail human body expect that flutters at every whiff of the breeze like the fan-like ears of the elephant that are constantly restless?

प्राप्ताः श्रियः सकलकामदुघास्ततः किं
न्यस्तं पदं शिरसि विद्विषतां ततः किम् ।
सम्पादिताः प्रणयिनो विभवैस्ततः किं
कल्पं स्थितास्तनुभृतां तनुभिस्ततः किम् ॥

What matters, if thou art the master of goddess of wealth that could satisfy all thy desires! What, if all thy enemies are annihilated and friends richly served with wealth! What if the span of thy life be lengthened to a million years!

जीर्णा कन्था ततः किं सितममलपटं पट्टसूत्रं ततः किं
एका भार्या ततः किं हयकरिसुगणैरावृतो वा ततः किम् ।
भक्तं भुक्तं ततः किं कदशनमथवा वासरान्ते ततः किं
व्यक्तज्योतिर्न वान्तर्मथितभवभयं वैभवं वा ततः किम् ॥

Again, what if the tattered garments served thee for a robe, or the silken tassels and the fine white linen adorned thee! What if thou hast only one wife for a companion or if thou art surrounded by beautiful damsels, elephants and horses! What if fed on rich dishes or forced to a frugal meal at the end of the day! The heights reached or privations suffered by thee are to no purpose, if the lamp of knowledge is not lighted in thee, and the dawn of enlightenment has not been thy lot.

रम्याश्चान्द्रमरीचयस्तृणवती रम्या वनान्तस्थली
रम्यं साधुसमागमागतसुखं काव्येषु रम्याः कथाः ।
कोपोपाहितबाष्पबिन्दुतरलं रम्यं प्रियाया मुखं
सर्वं रम्यमनित्यतामुपगते चित्ते न किञ्चित्पुनः ॥

Beautiful moonlight; the green velvety glades covered with grass; the company of dear friends; the charms of passion-poetry; the pearly drops in the agitated beloved's eyes; all these captivated my heart once. Since the transience of the world is depicted vividly before my mind's eye, all these enjoyments have now turned insipid and lost their charms for me.

किं वेदैः स्मृतिभिः पुराणपठनैः शास्त्रैर्महाविस्तरैः
स्वर्गग्रामकुटीनिवासफलदैः कर्मक्रियाविभ्रमैः ।
मुक्त्वैकं भवदुःखभाररचनाविध्वंसकालानलं
स्वात्मानन्दपदप्रवेशकलनं शेषा वणिग्वृत्तयः ॥

The study of the Vedas, the Smṛtis, the Purāṇas, the numerous Śāstras and the practice of the sacrificial rites can at best attain for the devotee a small place in Paradise, no other gain can it ensure. These are like small gains of traders. Nothing but self-realization shall be the sole pursuit of the devotee and it alone shall lead him to cut the bonds of misery in this world.

आयुः कल्लोललोलं कतिपयदिवसस्थायिनी यौवनश्रीः
अर्थाः संकल्पकल्पा घनसमयतडिद्विभ्रमा भोगपूगाः ।
कण्ठाश्लेषोपगूढं तदपि च न चिरं यत्प्रियाभिः प्रणीतं
ब्रह्मण्यासक्तचित्ता भवत भवभयाम्भोधिपारं तरीतुम् ॥

Life like the ripples on waters is unstable; youth lasts but a few days; wealth is like a fleeting memory; enjoyments of senses are momentary like the flash of lightning in the rainy season; so too is the delightful embrace of the beloved wife. Take heed, O man, to cross the ocean of life. Merge thyself in Brahma.

ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलीमात्रं किं लोभाय मनस्विनः ।
शफरीस्फुरितेनाब्धिः क्षुब्धो न खलु जायते ॥

Those on whom the light has dawned; those who have attained to the knowledge of Brahma, them the world cannot win over. The frisking of the fry can seldom arouse a wave in the waters of the sea.

मातर्मेदिनि तात मारुत सखे तेजः सुबन्धो जलं
भ्रातर्व्योम निबद्ध एव भवतामन्त्यः प्रणामाञ्जलिः ।
युष्मत्सङ्गवशोपजातसुकृतस्फारस्फुरन्निर्मल-
ज्ञानापास्तसमस्तमोहमहिमा लीये परब्रह्मणि ॥

O mother earth, father air, friend light, kinsman water, brother sky, I bid you farewell with folded hands. Born of you I did perform many a holy act, the fruits whereof opened the doors of enlightenment for me and destroyed the evil attachments for the world. Now I merge myself in the Supreme Brahma.

यदासीदज्ञानं स्मरतिमिरसंस्कारजनितं
तदा दृष्टं नारीमयमिदमशेषं जगदपि ।
इदानीमस्माकं पटुतरविवेकाञ्जनजुषां
समीभूता दृष्टिस्त्रिभुवनमपि ब्रह्म तनुते ॥

Cupid coloured my vision and steeped in ignorance I lay. The whole world appeared to me full of beautiful maidens. The collyrium of discrimination I applied to my eyes. Now I saw clearly and found that the three worlds were nothing but the Lord Himself.

यावत्स्वस्थमिदं शरीरमरुजं यावच्च दूरे जरा
यावच्चेन्द्रियशक्तिरप्रतिहता यावत् क्षयो नायुषः ।
आत्मश्रेयसि तावदेव विदुषा कार्यः प्रयत्नो महान्
संदीप्ते भवने तु कूपखननं प्रत्युद्यमः कीदृशः ॥

So long as this body is in good health, old age is at a distance, and the senses maintain their vigour, the wise one should vigorously strive for salvation; or else it would be too late. What profitteth the man that starts digging a well when the house is already on fire.

ज्ञानं सतां मानमदादिनाशनं
केषांचिदेतन्मदमानकारणम् ।
स्थानं विविक्तं यतिनां विमुक्तये
कामातुराणामतिकामकारणम् ॥

Every thing in this world can be put to misuse. Knowledge in the wise destroys vanity and ignorance. In the wicked it develops arrogance. Solitude to the devotee is apt to secure salvation. In the adulterer, it only feeds the flame of lust and passion.

नायं ते समयो रहस्यमधुना निद्राति नाथो यदि
स्थित्वा द्रक्ष्यति कुप्यति प्रभुरिति द्वारेषु येषां वचः ।
चेतस्तानपहाय याहि भवनं देवस्य विश्वेशितु-
र्निर्दौवारिकनिर्दयोक्त्यपरुषं निःसीमशर्मप्रदम् ॥

My Heart ! you knocked at the door of a petty man of the earth. You were told:—

"The lord sleeps, you cannot see him now." You prefer to wait. They tell you "the lord would be angry if he sees you here." Why not then seek the door of the Lord of the Universe ? No guard stands there. None is there to utter a harsh word to you. The approach is without a bar and peace reigns supreme there.

प्रियसख विपद्दण्डव्रातप्रतापपरम्परा-
तिपरिचपले चिन्ताचक्रे निधाय विधिः खलः ।
मृदमिव बलात्पिण्डीकृत्य प्रगल्भकुलालवद्
भ्रमयति मनो नो जानीमः किमत्र विधास्यति ॥

With gentle thumps, with a wooden-piece, O Friend, on the revolving-wheel, the potter moulds his wet lump of clay. So doth the Creator, the crafty Potter, revolve my mind His clay, with vicissitudes for the wooden-piece, on the wheel of cares. I stand aghast, ignorant, watching, while the Potter has His way.

रे कन्दर्प करं कदर्थयसि किं कोदण्डटङ्कारितै
रे रे कोकिल कोमलैः कलरवैः किं त्वं वृथा जल्पसि ।
मुग्धे स्निग्धविदग्धक्षेपमधुरैर्लोलैः कटाक्षैरलं
चेतश्चुम्बितचन्द्रचूडचरणध्यानामृतं वर्तते ॥

Why raisest thou, thy bow to shoot the shaft of love O Cupid ? In vain thou singest before me thy song of separation from thy beloved O cuckoo. Why castest thou in vain thy lustful glances O beautiful maiden ? Ye cannot swerve me from the path of righteousness; now that I have drunk deep of the nectar flowing from a meditation of the feet of Śiva.

कौपीनं शतखण्डजर्जरतरं कन्था पुनस्तादृशी
तैश्चिन्त्यं निरपेक्षभैक्ष्यमशनं निद्रा श्मशाने वने ।
मित्रामित्रसमानतातिविमला चिन्तातिशून्यालये
ध्वस्ताशेषमदप्रमादमुदितो योगी सुखं तिष्ठति ॥

Why should one be tempted by even the kingdom of the three worlds? Is it not enough to have a torn loin cloth and a tattered rag to dress in, to move about carefree living on whatever is obtained by begging, to have the forest or a cremation ground for his dwelling place, to be allowed to move about without any restraint in entire peace and to have contentment and the enjoyment of meditation?

भोगा भङ्गुरवृत्तयो बहुविधास्तैरेव चायं भव-
स्तत्कस्येह कृते परिभ्रमत रे लोकाः कृतं चेष्टितैः ।
आशापाशशतोपशान्तिविशदं चेतः समाधीयतां
कामोच्छित्तिवशे स्वधामनि यदि श्रद्धेयमस्मद्वचः ॥

Desires and their fulfilment are but passing sensations leading to attachments in the world, the cause of rebirth. Knowing this, people engage themselves in the cycle of actions. What good does come of this evil desire? If you have faith in what I say, then by all that lies in your power shatter this network of desires and hopes and cleanse the mind of them. With the mind thus purified seek refuge at all hours in the Supreme Self of which you are a part.

धन्यानां गिरिकन्दरे निवसतां ज्योतिः परं ध्यायता-
मानन्दाश्रुकणान् पिबन्ति शकुना निःशङ्कमङ्केशयाः ।
अस्माकं तु मनोरथोपरचितप्रासादवापीतट-
क्रीडाकाननकेलिकौतुकजुषामायुः परं क्षीयते ॥

Blessed are they that dwell in the mountain caves meditating on the Supreme Light; their tears of joy flow down their cheeks and allay the thirst of the chirping little birds that fearlessly sit on their laps. And our lives, what a regret, are spent in pursuit of futile amusements, seeking pleasure amongst the bowers, standing by the sparkling fountains and in big palaces of Desires.

आधिव्याधिशतैर्जनस्य विविधैरारोग्यमुन्मूल्यते
लक्ष्मीर्यत्र पतन्ति तत्र विवृतद्वारा इव व्यापदः ।
जातं जातमवश्यमाशु विवशं मृत्युः करोत्यात्मसात्
तत्किं तेन निरङ्कुशेन विधिना यन्निर्मितं सुस्थिरम् ॥

Numerous are the diseases of the mind and the flesh that prey on the human frame. Wherever dwelleth wealth and power, misery and mishaps creep in, as through an open door. Death is sure to follow him soon, who is born. He shall never escape its jaws. I question myself, where is that object created by the wilful Creator that may last for ever ?

कृच्छ्रेणामेध्यमध्ये नयमिततनुभिः स्थीयते गर्भमध्ये
कान्ताविश्लेषदुःखव्यतिकरविषमो यौवने चोपभोगः ।
वामाक्षीणामवज्ञा विहसितवसतिर्वृद्धभावोऽप्यसाधुः
संसारे रे मनुष्या वदत यदि सुखं स्वल्पमप्यस्ति किञ्चित् ॥

In his earliest stage man lies tortured and huddled up in the mother's womb, enveloped in impurities. Pain crosses the path of the passionate youth, yearning for his separated beloved. In old age, man is sneered at by handsome young women. Tell, me then O man, if there is any thing in this world which may make you happy.

व्याघ्रीव तिष्ठति जरा परितर्जयन्ती
रोगाश्च शत्रव इव प्रहरन्ति देहम् ।
आयुः परिस्रवति भिन्नघटादिवाम्भो
लोकस्तथाप्यहितमाचरतीति चित्रम् ॥

Like the dreaded wolf old age stands at the door. Diseases like enemies beseige the citadel of health. Life like water from the cracked water-jug silently flows away. What a wonder that, man, in the teeth of all these facts, should act in a way harmful to himself!

गात्रं संकुचितं गतिर्विगलिता भ्रष्टा च दन्तावलि-
र्दृष्टिर्नश्यति वर्धते बधिरता वक्त्रं च लालायते।
वाक्यं नाद्रियते च बान्धवजनो भार्या न शुश्रूषते
हा कष्टं पुरुषस्य जीर्णवयसः पुत्रोऽप्यमित्रायते ॥

O, the misery of old age! The body shrivels up. The gait becomes feeble. The teeth give way. The eyes do not see, the ears do not hear. An old man's advice goes unheeded. The wife or relations do not look after him. And to crown all, even a son rises in rebellion.

अहौ वा हारे वा बलवति रिपौ वा सुहृदि वा
मणौ वा लोष्टे वा कुसुमशयने वा दृषदि वा।
तृणे वा स्त्रैणे वा मम समदृशो यान्ति दिवसाः
क्वचित्पुण्यारण्ये शिव शिव शिवेति प्रलपतः॥

How I wish I could pass my days in a sacred forest with the name of Lord Śiva constantly on my lips! How I wish I could regard all as the same—a fragment of the all pervading Brahma! Would these eyes leave making any distinctions between reptiles and pets, between the menacing foe and the gentle friend, between a shining gem and a clod of earth, between the velvety sod and the hard stone-slab, between the insignificant straw and the dazzling damsel!

वयमिह परितुष्टा वल्कलैस्त्वं दुकूलैः
सम इह परितोषो निर्विशेषो विशेषः ।
स तु भवतु दरिद्रो यस्य तृष्णा विशाला
मनसि च परितुष्टे कोऽर्थवान् को दरिद्रः ॥

Barks of trees for dress satisfy some: silk robes satisfy others. Both find contentment in an equal degree. When the mind is contented, the distinction between the rich and poor vanishes. Those alone are truly poor who can find no contentment owing to their inordinate greed.



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C. L. Sapru.
Purushyar,
H. kadal.
Srinagar.
(KMR)